

Wednesday, February 11, 2004

Duxbury Clipper



Snug Harbor Boat Works is looking to breathe new life into the former location of Goodrich Lumber, to grow its boat building operations.

Boat Builder Seeks Goodrich Land

By KEITH L. MARTIN

Nearly a year and a half after Goodrich Lumber left Duxbury for Kingston, a local businessman is hoping to use the property to expand boat building.

Jeff Grey, president and owner of Snug Harbor Boat Works, submitted a proposal with the Inspectional Services office on January 30 to turn the former lumberyard on Railroad Avenue into a space for boat building as well as maintenance and storage.

Snug Harbor constructs traditional wooden and cold-molded boats and currently has a location down by the waterfront at the old Duxbury Marine Railway. Grey said they lease this space from the Duxbury Bay Maritime School and now want to increase their operations to build slightly bigger boats for customers.

"We are going to use the current building as it is," said Grey of the 16,000-square-foot building. "It is a perfect application for us. It is a big, wide open space with high ceilings and big doors, so we can use it as is."

He added that if approved, his company will definitely take steps to change the visual aesthetics of the building, however.

"We'll improve the site in terms of putting in landscaping and painting to get the building looking nice," said Grey. "We want this to be a nice place to drive by."

According to Building Inspector Richard MacDonald, Grey must first get a special permit from the Zoning Board of Appeals, site plan approval from the Planning Board and also have the project reviewed by the Conservation Commission.

Grey said that this will be his first appearance before the town's land boards, but thinks that his proposed use of the building is an improvement from its former use on many levels.

For one, he said, the site will see less traffic as the only in and out movement would be by employees and the occasional customer and there would be no constant flow of lumber trucks.

Most important, said Grey, the project will help support an industry that is a rich part of Duxbury's history.

"This is the last link to the heritage of boat building, which was the bread and butter of this town for hundreds of years," he said. "It is very important to maintain this tradition."

As opposed to fiberglass or plastic boat building, the Boat Works relies on boats built by hand, something Grey said is hard to find in this area.

Another important element of the expansion, he said, was that it would help relieve some of the congestion on the waterfront that Snug Harbor businesses and residents have noticed growing over the years. Grey said he has spoken with Bayside Marine owner J.R. Kent about the possibility of moving some of his boats to the Railroad Avenue location if approved.

"Boatyards are getting jam-packed and this will help relieve that congestion," said Grey. "I think this is a good use of the space and good for the town."